

Application No. 09/634,185

Filed: August 9, 2000

TC Art Unit: 2643

Confirmation No.: 5742

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1-3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~3~~ 15, wherein the housing is configured to be ~~disposed in an opening of a wall and secured to the wall at the edges of the~~ opening.

5. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~4~~ 15, further comprising connectors for connecting the premises interface circuitry to wiring within ~~the a~~ a wall in a splice fashion.

6. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~2~~ 15, wherein the housing is attachable to ~~a~~ the wall in a removable manner.

7. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~6~~ 15, wherein the ~~housing~~ premises interface circuitry includes a plug for insertion into a modular telephone-jack and to be thereby communicably coupled to the premises equipment.

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8-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~15~~ 41, wherein the premises interface circuitry includes an interface to a private branch exchange.

13. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~15~~ 41, wherein the user ~~telephone interface circuitry includes~~ is an analog telephone interface.

14. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~15~~ 41, wherein the user ~~telephone interface circuitry includes~~ is a digital telephone interface.

15. (Currently amended) A communications outlet, comprising:

a housing having a faceplate portion and a second portion,
the housing being configured for attachment to at least one of:

an outlet box,

an opening of a wall and

an electrical wiring raceway,

such that, after attachment, the faceplate portion is accessible
to a user and the second portion is inaccessible to the user due

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~~to the attachment to the outlet box, the wall or the electric wiring raceway configured for placement in an operating area of a user;~~

~~user interface circuitry associated within the housing and accessible via the faceplate portion for communicating with user equipment including a user telephone device and a user data device, the user interface circuitry including a link layer data interface to the user data device;~~

~~premises interface circuitry associated within the housing and accessible via the second portion for communicating with premises equipment located generally outside the user operating area, the premises equipment including data processing equipment and telephone communications equipment providing access to a public telephone network, the interface to the premises equipment include wired and wireless connections; and~~

~~a bridge circuitry associated within the housing and for establishing at least one computer network communications connections between the user interface circuitry and the premises interface circuitry; and~~

~~a processor operative to provide high-level services to the user via the user data interface.~~

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16. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~15~~ 33, wherein the at least one high-level services includes data encryption.

17. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~15~~ 33, wherein the at least one high-level services includes user authentication.

18. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~15~~ 33, wherein the at least one high-level services includes a diagnostics and status reporting to the user.

19. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim 18, wherein the diagnostics ~~are~~ is operative to detect a problems with a connection ~~to~~ between the user data device and the communications outlet, and wherein the status reporting is operative to notify the user of the detected connection problems.

20. (Previously Presented) A communications outlet according to claim 15, further comprising power circuitry operative to receive DC power from one of the interfaces.

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21. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim ~~15~~ 33, wherein the at least one high-level services includes Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) services.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently amended) A communications outlet according to claim 15, wherein the user interface circuitry, premises interface circuitry, and bridge circuitry are arranged on standard circuit cards disposed in the housing.

24. (Previously Presented) A communications outlet according to claim 23, wherein the standard circuit cards are Personal Computer Memory Card International Association (PCMCIA) circuit cards.

25-32. (Canceled)

33. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 15, further comprising a processor operative to provide at least one high-level service to the user via the user interface circuitry.

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34. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes a web service.

35. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 34, wherein the web service provides a link to a web service in at least one other communication outlet.

36. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 35, wherein the web service in the at least one other communication outlet provides status information concerning the at least one other communication outlet.

37. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 34, wherein the web service provides a link to a web service in the premises equipment.

38. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 37, wherein the web service in the premises equipment provides status information concerning a network between the premises interface circuitry and the premises equipment.

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39. (New) A communications outlet according to claim 15, wherein the housing is configured to be secured to the outlet box.

40. (New) A communications outlet according to claim 15, wherein the housing is configured to be secured to the electric wiring raceway.

41. (New) A communications outlet according to claim 15, wherein the user interface circuitry includes a link-layer data interface.

42. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 15, wherein:

the premises equipment includes telephone communication equipment that provides access to a public telephone network; and

the user equipment includes at least one user telephone device.

43. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 15, wherein the faceplate includes a plurality of connectors.

44. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 15, wherein the user interface circuitry provides a wireless communication link to the user equipment.

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45. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 15, wherein the premises interface circuitry provides a wireless communication link to the premises equipment.

46. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 15, wherein the premises interface circuitry provides a wired communication link to the premises equipment.

47. (New) A communication outlet according to claim 15, wherein the premises interface circuitry provides a wired and a wireless communication link to the premises equipment.